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Hosiery

FOR WOMEN
**A BUYING
GUIDE**

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HOSIERY FOR WOMEN

A BUYING GUIDE

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Bureau of Home Economics

TEN POINTS IN HOSIERY SELECTION

- 1 Fiber.**—Cotton, rayon, wool, silk, or a mixture, whichever meets the wearer's needs and is most suitable for the occasion.
 - 2 Weight.**—Are the hose for hard, moderate, or light wear, or for appearance only?
 - 3 Texture.**—Are the yarns tightly twisted and the fabric closely knitted so that the hose will be resistant to snagging?
 - 4 Construction.**—Are the hose shaped in the knitting so that they will fit permanently, or are they tubular knit and shaped by stretching?
 - 5 Elasticity.**—Do the ankle and welt stretch easily and go back into shape?
 - 6 Reinforcements.**—Are the foot and welt durably but not too heavily reinforced for the rest of the stocking?
 - 7 Size.**—Is the hose size at least one-half inch more than the length of the wearer's foot? Are the hose the proper length in the leg?
 - 8 Special fit.**—Would outsizes, two-way-stretch tops, narrow heels, or other special features give better fit than regular sizes?
 - 9 Appearance.**—Are there yarn imperfections, rings, or up-and-down stripes?
 - 10 Colorfastness.**—Is the color fast to washing, light, and perspiration?
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PARTS OF A FULL-FASHIONED STOCKING

Welt.—Hem or top, specially constructed to stand garter strain.

Garter run stop.—A narrow band of locked stitches below the welt knitted so as to prevent runs from going down into the leg of the stocking.

Fashion marks.—Groups of dropped stitches which shape the hose at the calf, heel, and toe.

Boot or leg.—Section between welt and ankle.

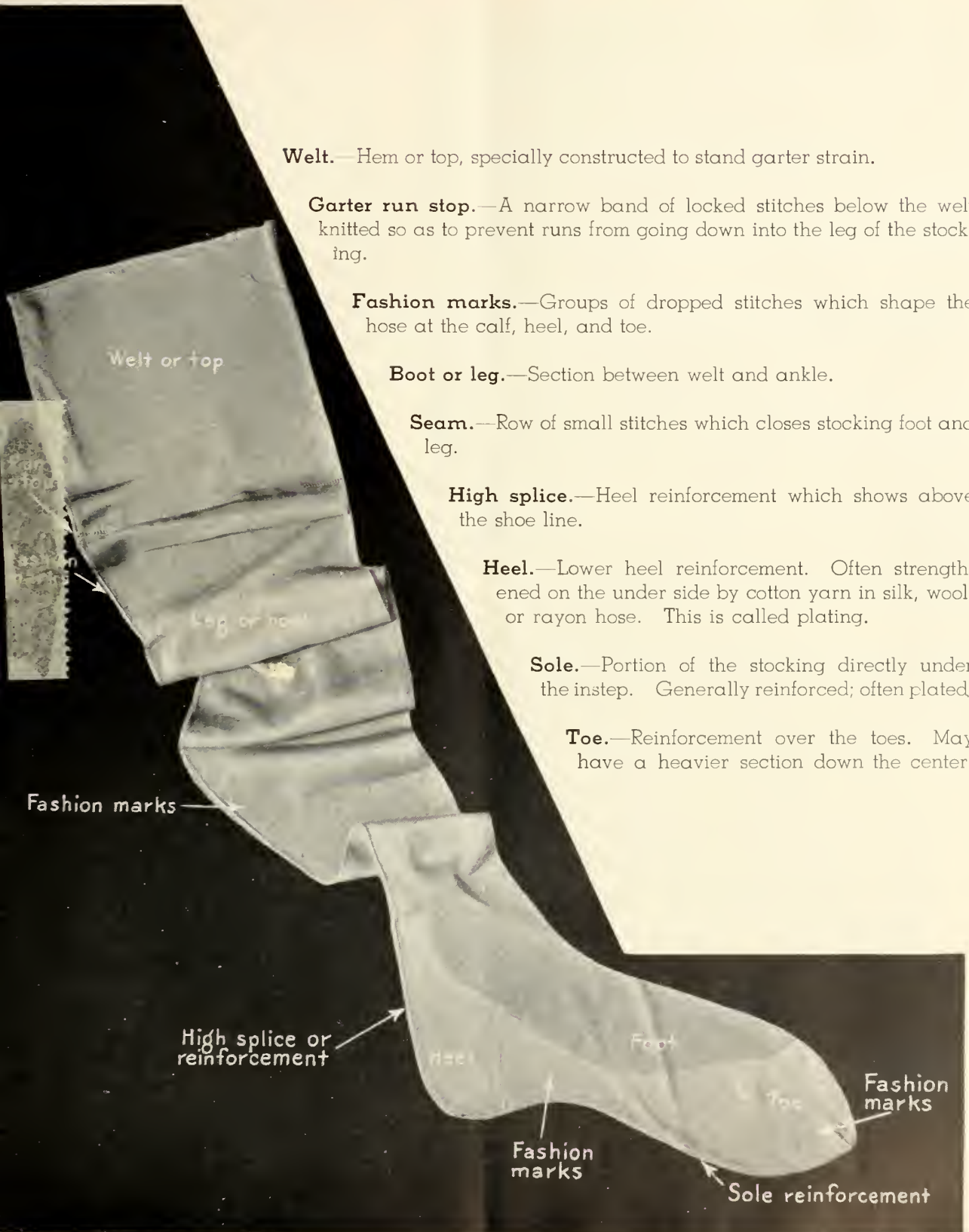
Seam.—Row of small stitches which closes stocking foot and leg.

High splice.—Heel reinforcement which shows above the shoe line.

Heel.—Lower heel reinforcement. Often strengthened on the under side by cotton yarn in silk, wool, or rayon hose. This is called plating.

Sole.—Portion of the stocking directly under the instep. Generally reinforced; often plated.

Toe.—Reinforcement over the toes. May have a heavier section down the center.



HOSE SUITABLE FOR THE OCCASION



- For general wear—cotton, silk, and rayon in heavy and medium weights.
- For sports and hard wear—cotton, wool, and service-weight silk.
- For evening—lightweight silk, rayon, and cotton in novelty knits.



Hose are commonly made either full-fashioned or circular-knit.

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Full-fashioned hose are knit to fit. The knee, calf, ankle, and heel are shaped by dropping stitches. There is a genuine seam at the back.

Circular-knit hose are knit in a tubular piece. Tension of knitting is increased to shape the calf, ankle, and foot. Tuck stitches are sometimes added to simulate fashion marks. Such hose have either a mock seam or no seam at all.

•



Since full-fashioned hose are shaped by knitting, they usually fit better than the circular knit. Many circular-knit hose are merely boarded into a shape which they lose when washed.

FULL-FASHIONED HOSE

● Full-fashioned toe.

Stitches looped at end of toe.
Stitches dropped at triangular section to shape toe.

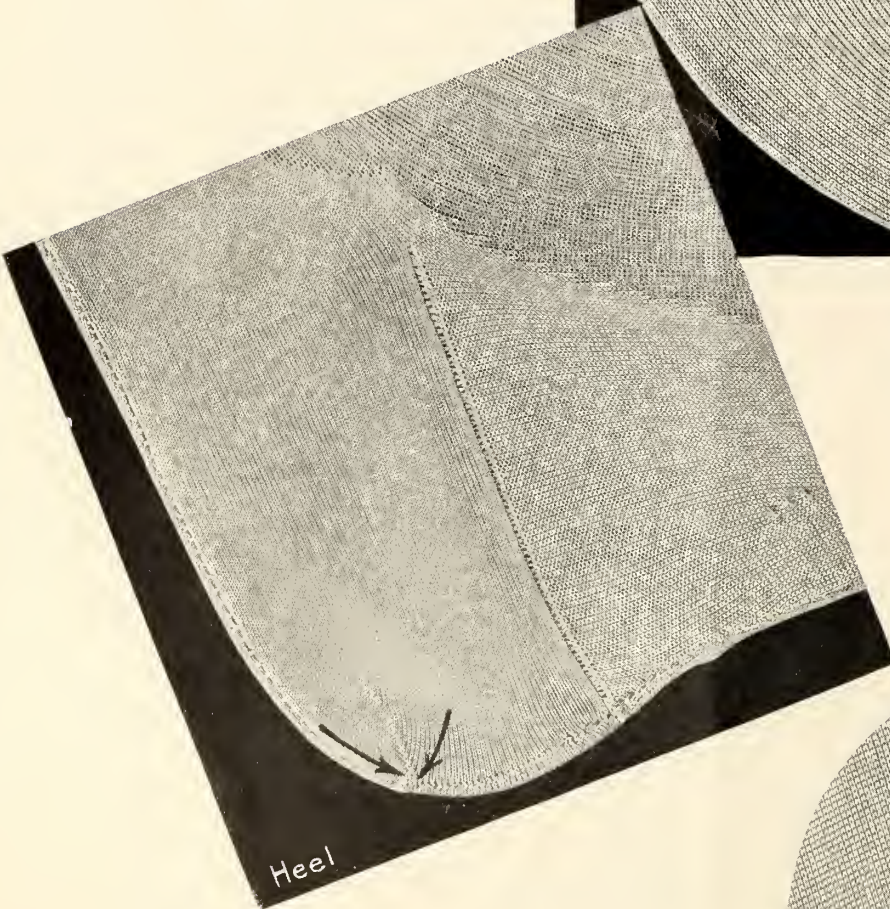
Toe



● Full-fashioned heel.

Foot closed by true seam.
Stitches dropped to shape instep.
Heel looped to keep bottom flat.
Stitches dropped to shape heel.
Wales (ribs) run vertically down heel.

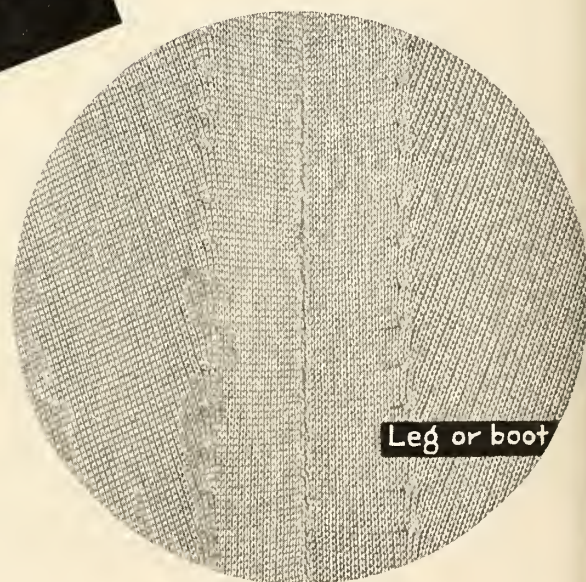
Heel

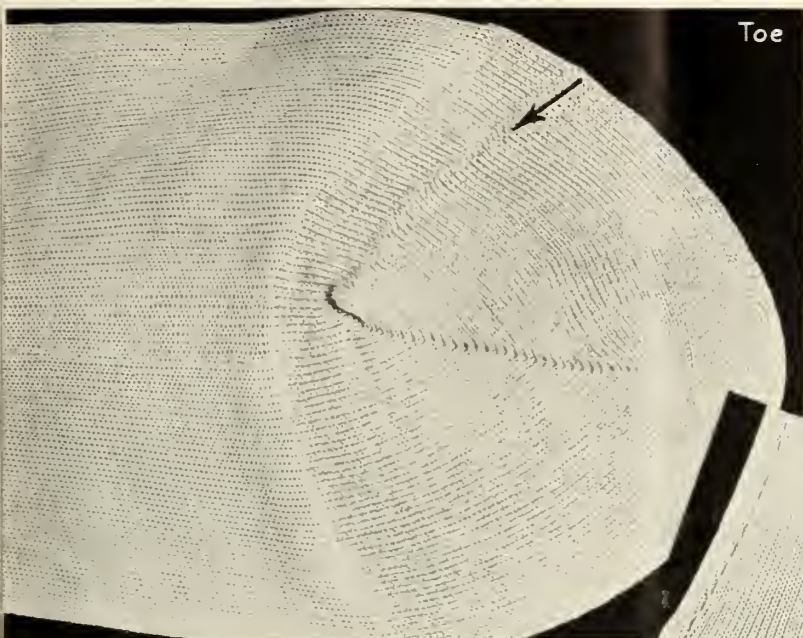


● Full-fashioned leg.

Stitches dropped to shape calf.
Genuine fashion marks.
True seam.

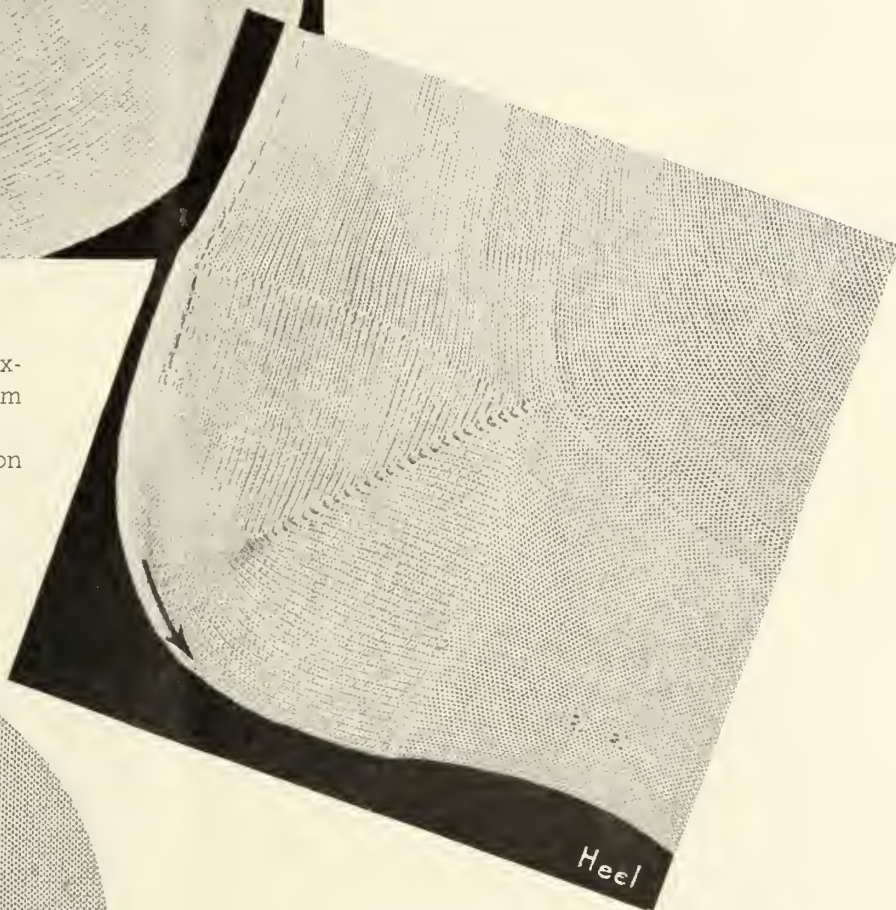
Leg or boot





● Circular-knit toe.

Stitches looped at top of toe.
Toe shaped by knitting at right angles.



● Circular-knit heel.

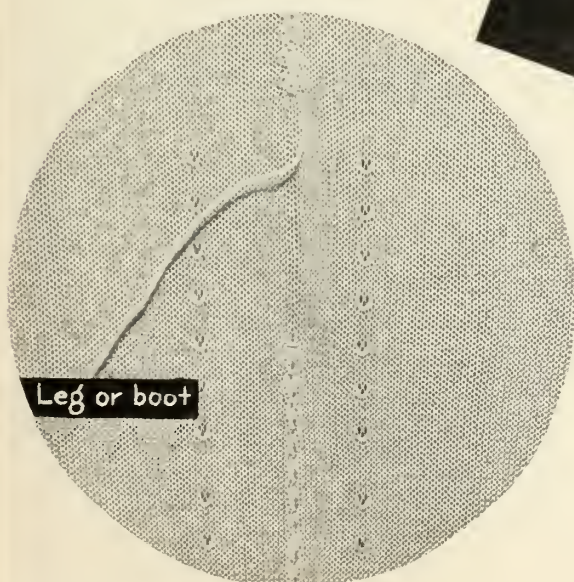
Foot knit tubular—mock seam extends into foot. Often the seam stops at the top of the heel.

No real shaping—imitation fashion marks.

No looping at heel.

Heel knit at right angles.

Wales (ribs) run around heel.



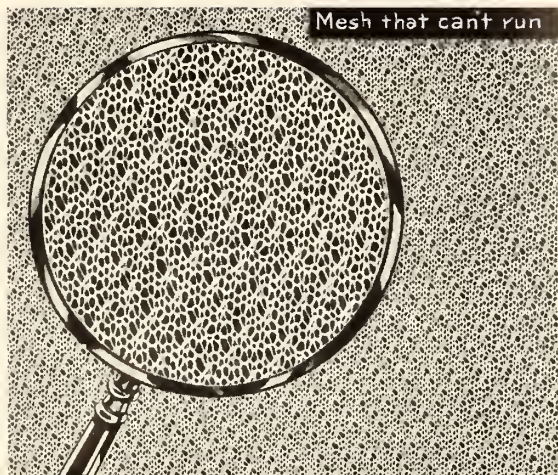
● Circular-knit leg.

No stitches dropped.

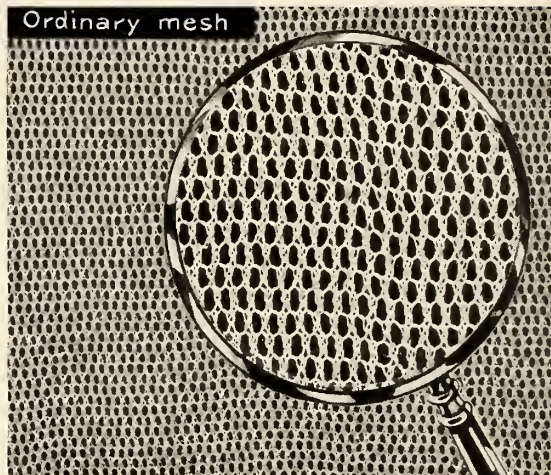
Imitation fashion marks.

Mock seam illustrated. In some hose there is no seam at all.

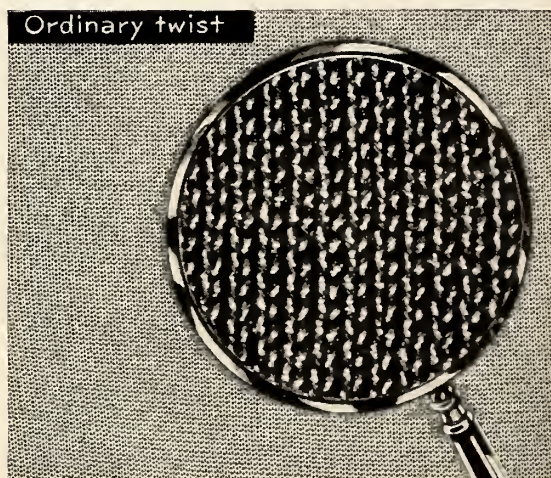
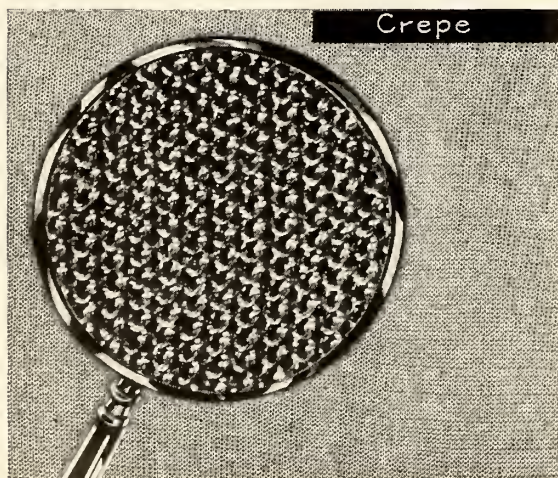
SPECIAL CONSTRUCTIONS



- Some mesh hose are made with a special stitch to prevent runs.



- Ordinary mesh hose catch easily and run badly.



Crepe hose are made from yarn that has been highly twisted to give a permanent dull finish and better fitting qualities. This high twist makes the crepe hose more resistant to snags than those made of ordinary yarns.

Ingrain hose are made from silk yarn that has been dyed before knitting. They have a lustrous appearance.

SIZE AND FIT

Buy the correct foot size.

Ordinarily a stocking should be about one-half inch longer than the foot. But if the foot is very narrow, a shorter stocking may fit it better.

Stocking feet that are too long wrinkle at the toes or pull up at the heel.

Too-short stockings cramp the toes or pull down under the heel.

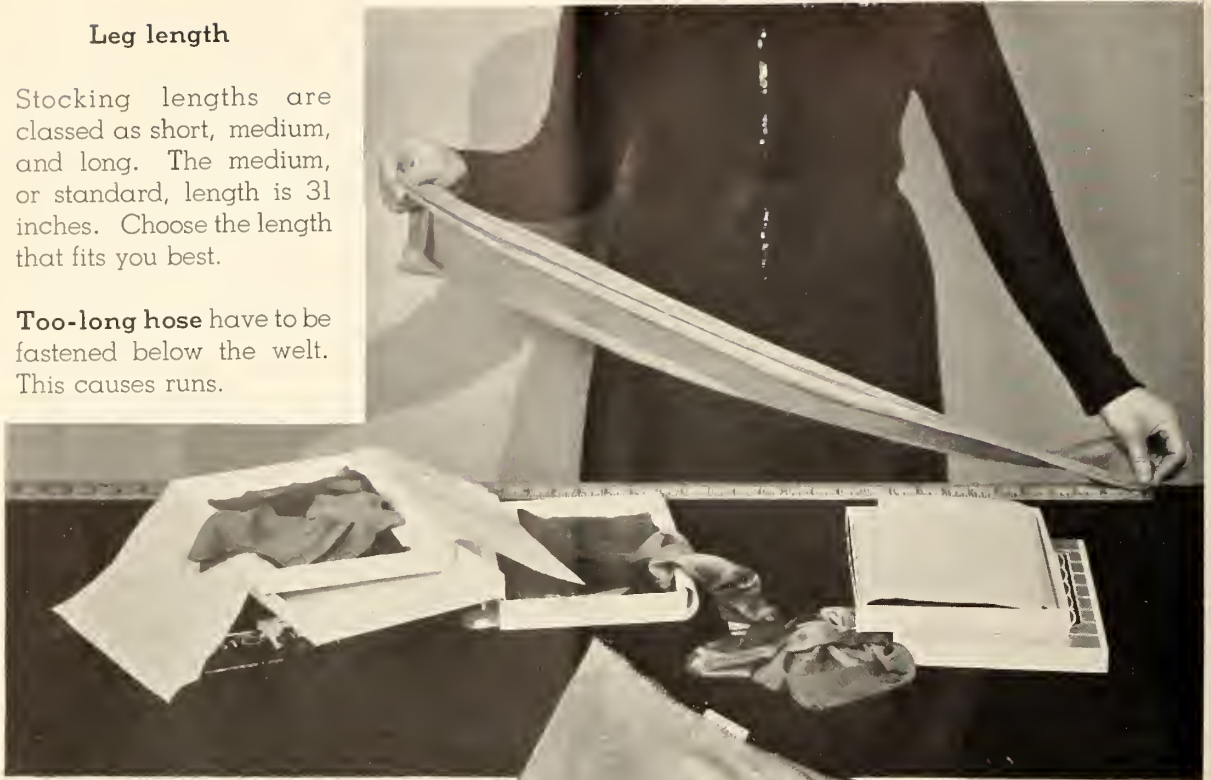


Check the marked foot length. It is not always accurate. The stocking size is the length of the foot in inches. For example, size 9 should be 9 inches long.

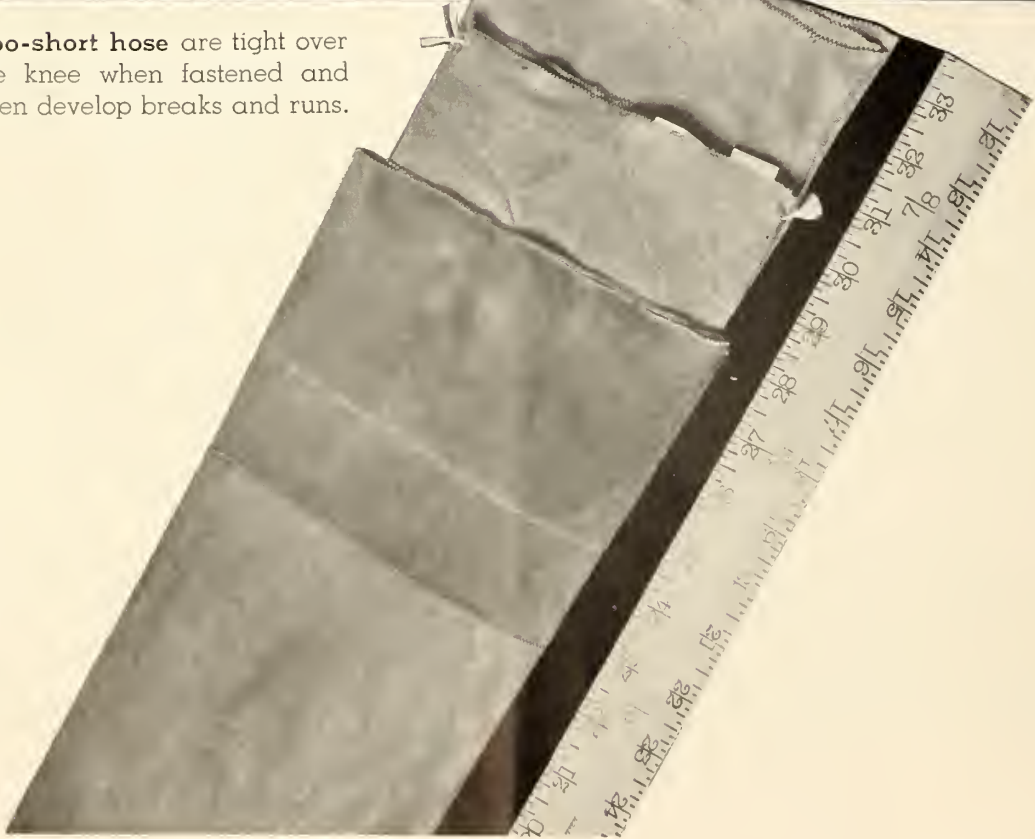
Leg length

Stocking lengths are classed as short, medium, and long. The medium, or standard, length is 31 inches. Choose the length that fits you best.

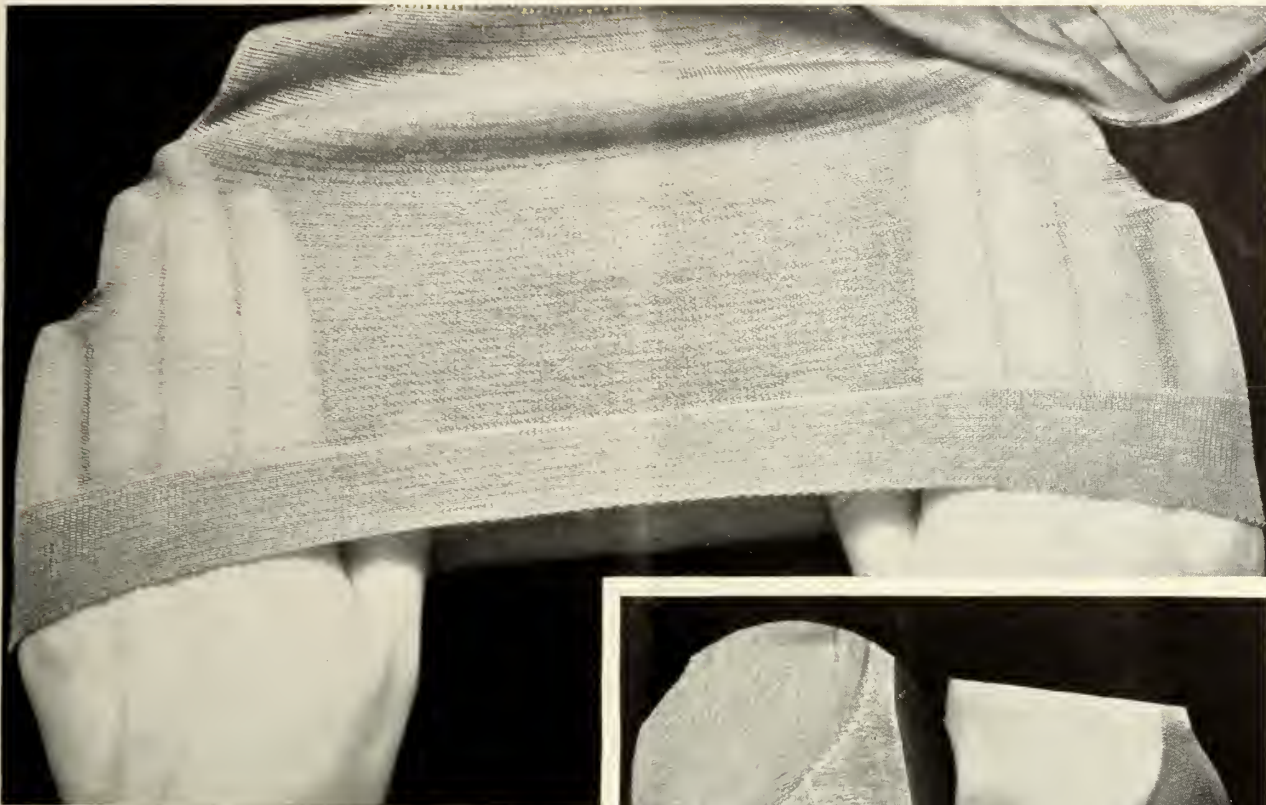
Too-long hose have to be fastened below the welt. This causes runs.



Too-short hose are tight over the knee when fastened and often develop breaks and runs.



SIZE AND FIT



Special sizes

- Hose with extra-stretch tops fit large women comfortably.
- Outsize hose are knit wide to fit legs large both above and below the knee.
- Misses' hose are knit smaller in the leg than regular sizes.

Heels

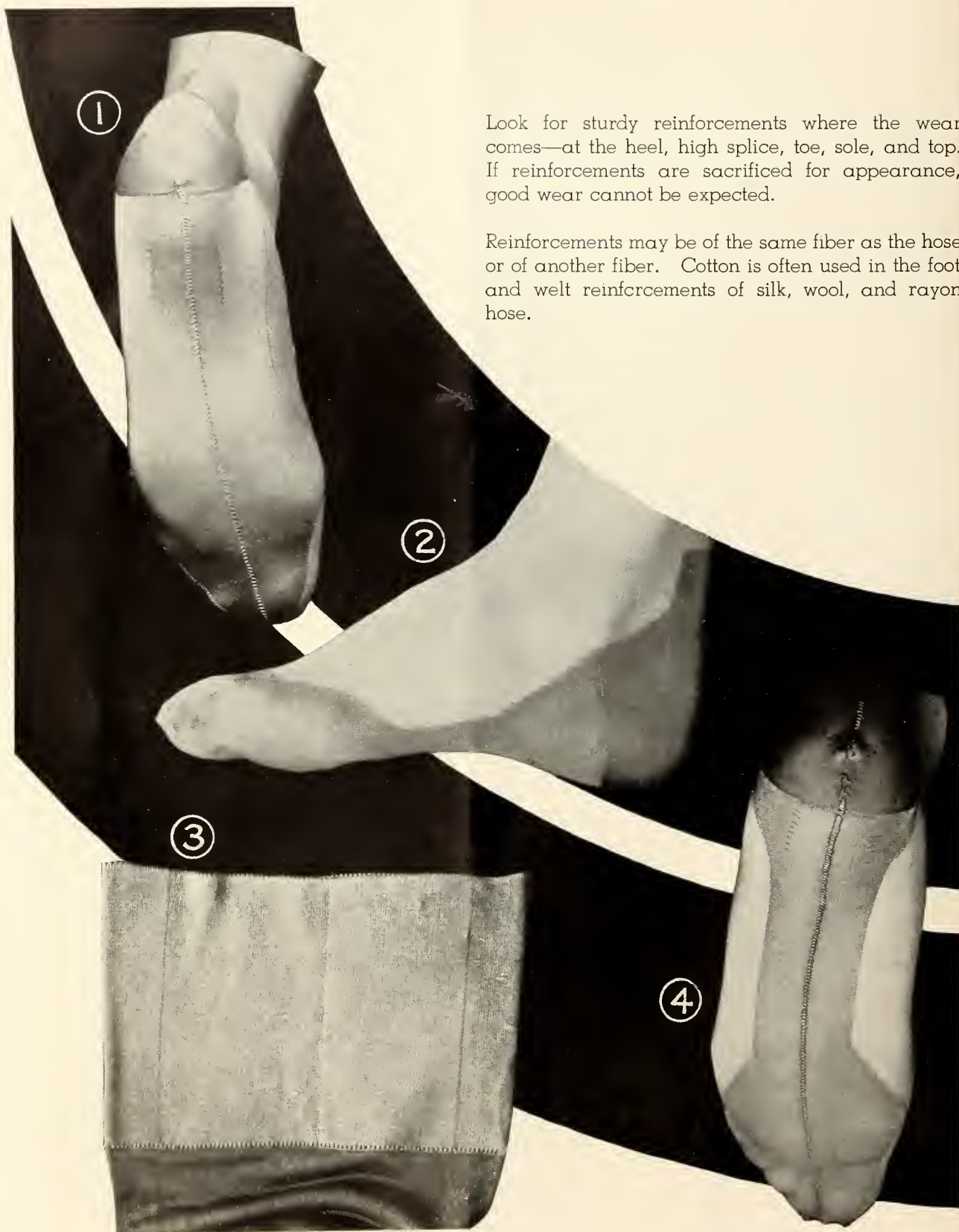
- Smooth, well-rounded heels fit best.
- Heels with bunchy seams are uncomfortable and do not fit smoothly.



REINFORCEMENTS

Look for sturdy reinforcements where the wear comes—at the heel, high splice, toe, sole, and top. If reinforcements are sacrificed for appearance, good wear cannot be expected.

Reinforcements may be of the same fiber as the hose or of another fiber. Cotton is often used in the foot and welt reinforcements of silk, wool, and rayon hose.

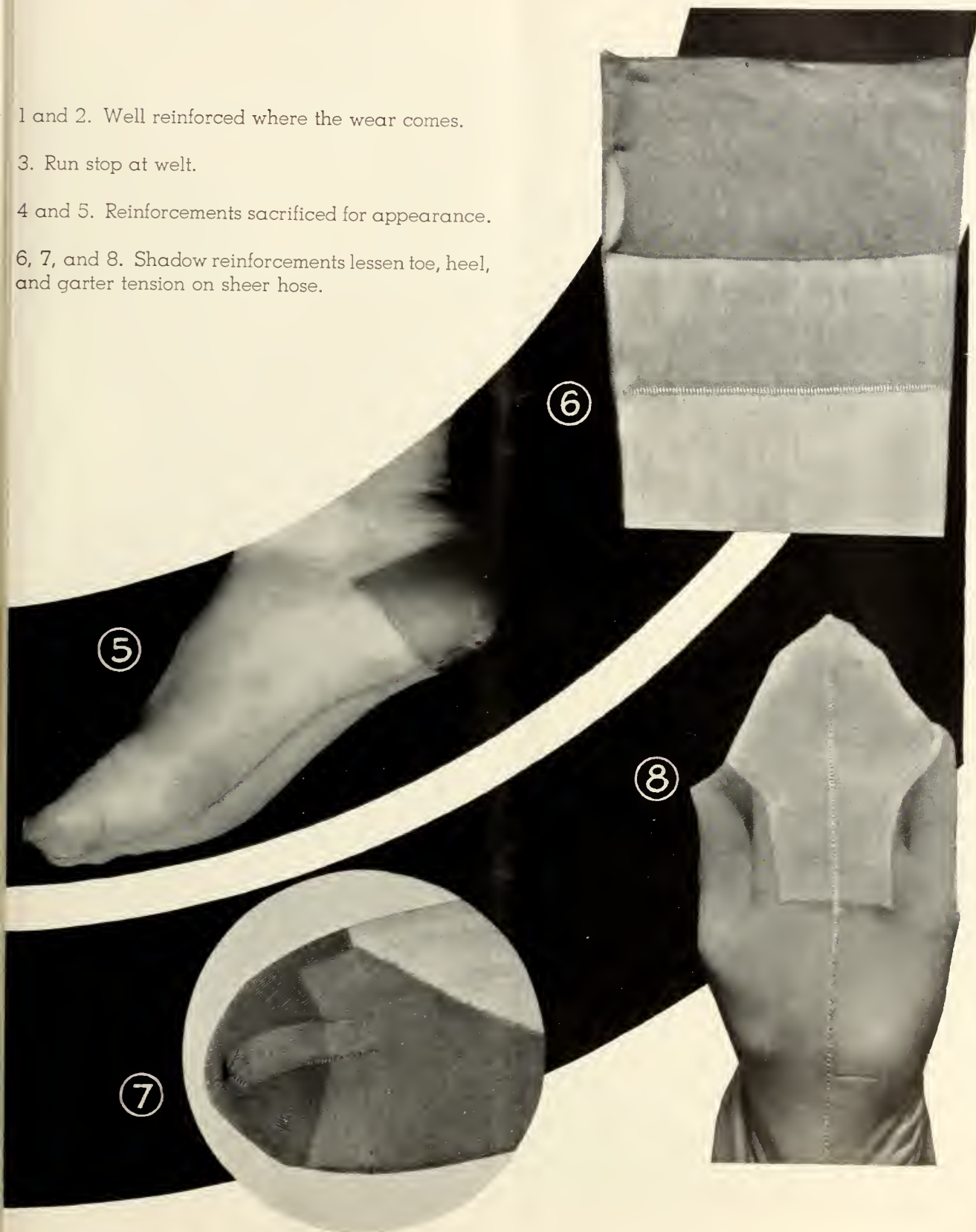


1 and 2. Well reinforced where the wear comes.

3. Run stop at welt.

4 and 5. Reinforcements sacrificed for appearance.

6, 7, and 8. Shadow reinforcements lessen toe, heel, and garter tension on sheer hose.



COTTON HOSE



Lisle yarn

- Cotton hose are made from both long- and short-staple cotton spun into yarns of different fineness.

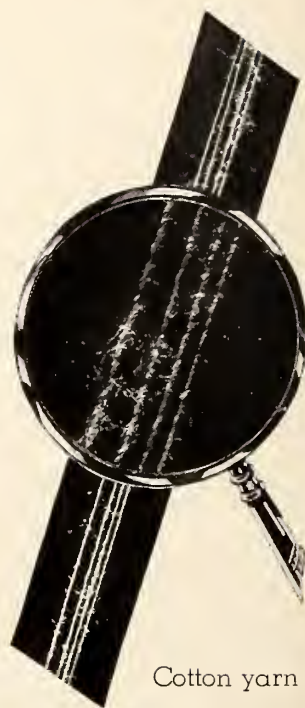
Service weights are knit of the lower counts of yarn—60/2, 70/2, and under.

Semi-service weights range from 80/2 to 100/2.

Both circular and full-fashioned cotton hose are now on the market.

- Lisle hose are made from high-grade, long-staple cotton. Lightweight lisle hose are made of yarns with a count ranging from 120/2 to 160/2. The yarn is treated (gassed) to remove the short ends, highly twisted to add more strength, and often mercerized to give a permanent luster.

- Plain knit cotton hose are desirable for sports wear. They are durable and do not snag readily. They also lessen the rub between shoe and hose.



Cotton yarn



- Cotton hose are now made in interesting mesh and novelty knits, as well as in plain knits in heavy, medium, and light weights. To give good durability, novelty hose should have adequate foot reinforcements. Because of the structure of cotton yarns, hose made of this fiber do not run as easily as do those knit of smoother yarns.



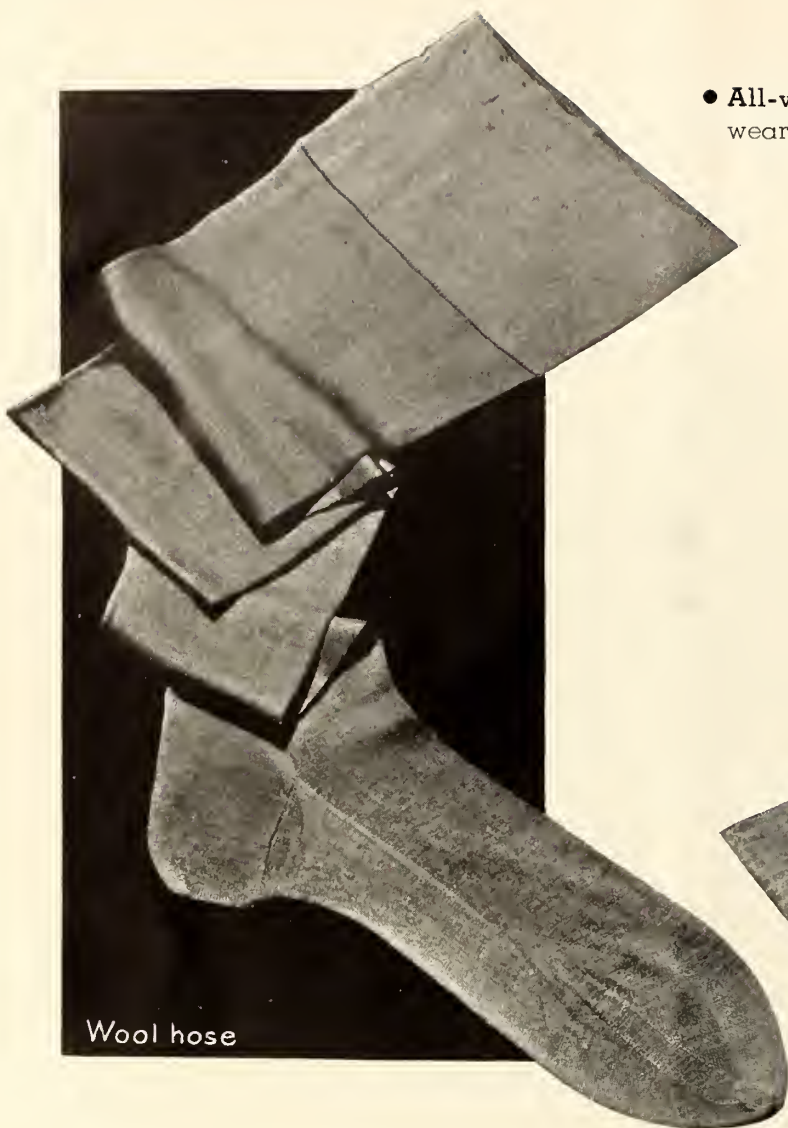
- Cotton hose dyed with vat dyes do not fade readily. Special new finishes tend to increase the strength and elasticity of the yarns and reduce the shrinkage when the hose are washed.

WOOL AND RAYON HOSE

- **All-wool** hose are warm, absorbent, and good for wear in very cold climates.

- **Wool mixtures** such as wool and silk, wool and rayon, and wool and cotton are lighter weight and less irritating to sensitive skins but not so warm as all-wool. They are used for general wear in cold weather and oftentimes for sports.

To allow for shrinkage of wool hose, buy a half size larger than the usual size.



Wool hose

- **Rayon** hose have a luster similar to silk. They are usually ringless, as rayon yarns are uniform in size. The best qualities are full-fashioned. These hose, however, are not so elastic as silk and therefore do not fit so well at the ankle and knee, but they are less expensive than silk.

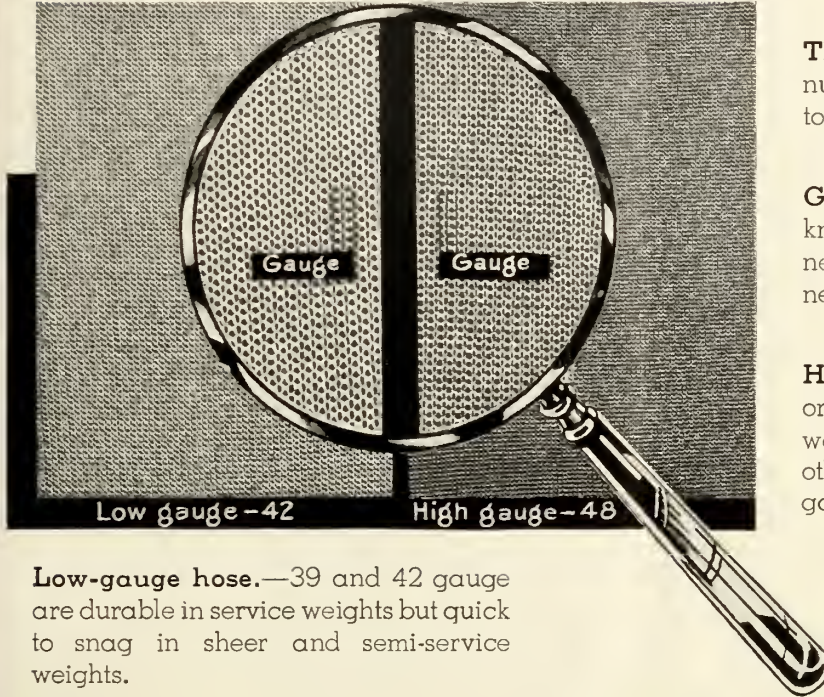


Rayon hose

WEIGHTS OF SILK HOSE

- The weight of full-fashioned hose depends on the thread (size of the yarn), gauge, and courses. However, no standard constructions have been adopted for service, semi-

service, and sheer hosiery, and therefore these terms do not always refer to the same weight of hose.



Thread, or size of yarn, means the number of fiber strands twisted or laid together to make one yarn.

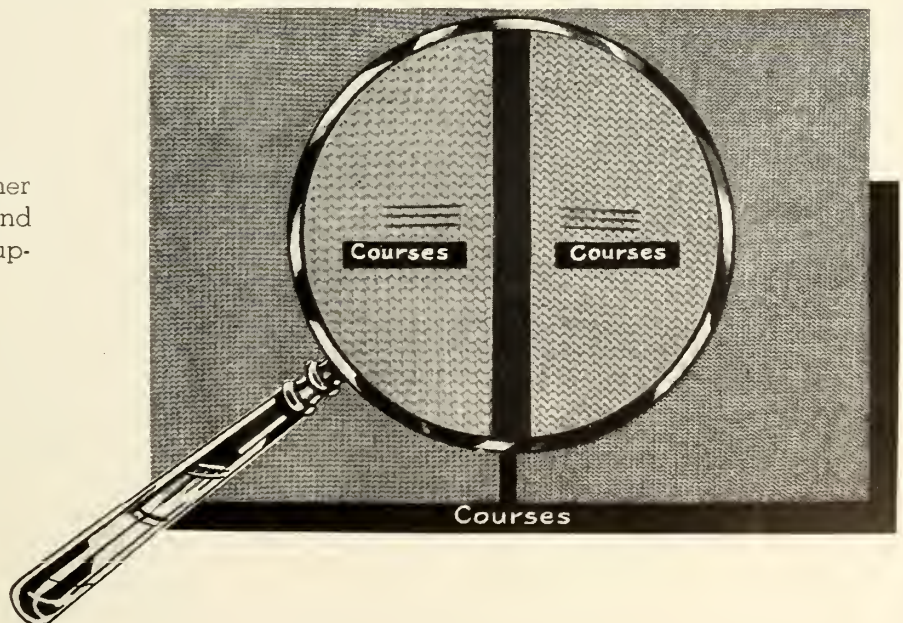
Gauge is a measure of the fineness of knitting. It refers to the number of needles used in each $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches of the needle bar of the knitting machine.

High-gauge hose.—48, 51, 54 gauge or over are finer looking and better wearing in the sheer weights than others of the same thread but lower gauge.

Courses

- Courses are the crosswise loops most apparent on the wrong side of the hose:

Courses that are close together help to make the hose fine and strong and increase the up-and-down stretch.



SERVICE WEIGHT—SILK

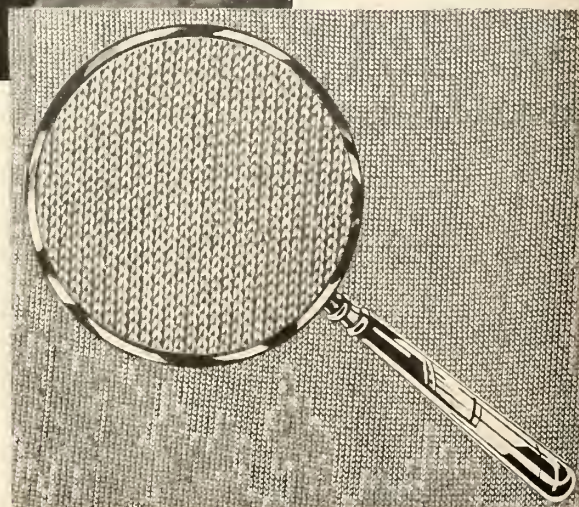


39 gauge 10 thread.

- Thread and gauge typical of service-weight hose:

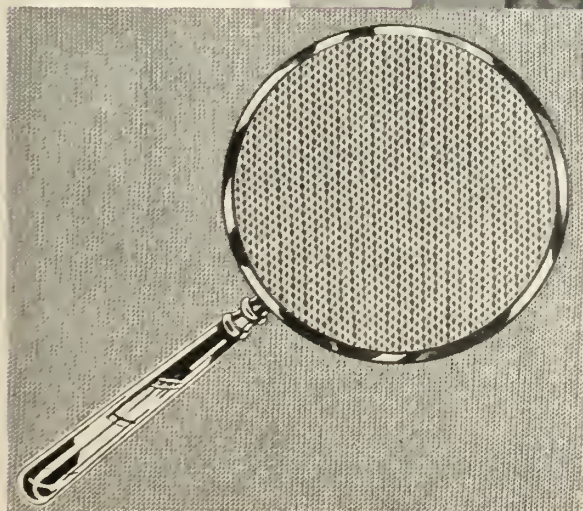
Gauge	Thread
39	Nine or over.
42	Eight or over.
45	Eight or over.
48	Seven or over.
51	Six or over.

For hard wear.





42 gauge 7 thread.

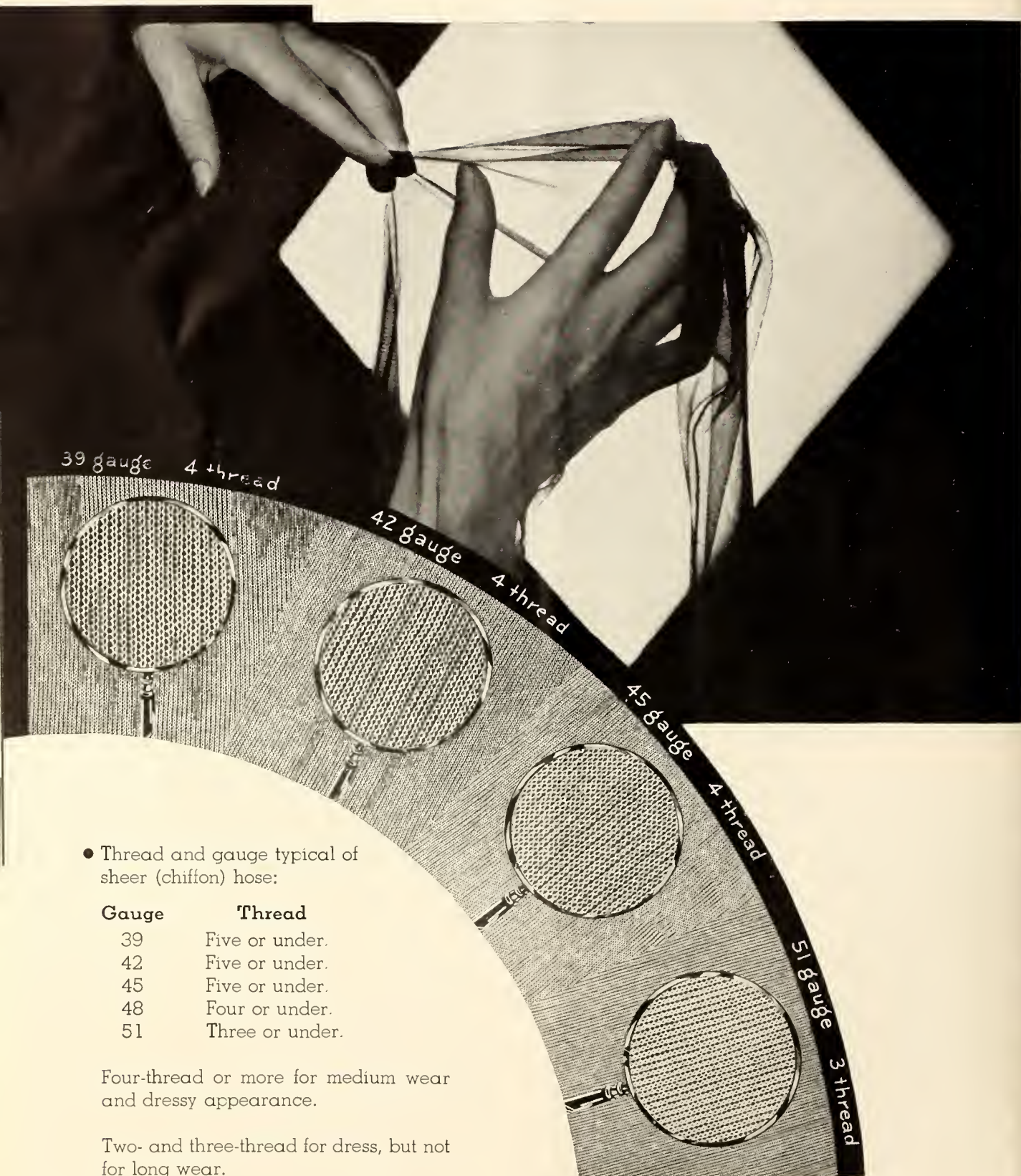


- Thread and gauge typical of semi-service-weight hose:

Gauge	Thread
39	Six to and including eight.
42	Six to and including seven.
45	Six to and including seven.
48	Five to and including six.
51	Four to and including five.

For general wear.

SHEER WEIGHT—SILK



- Thread and gauge typical of sheer (chiffon) hose:

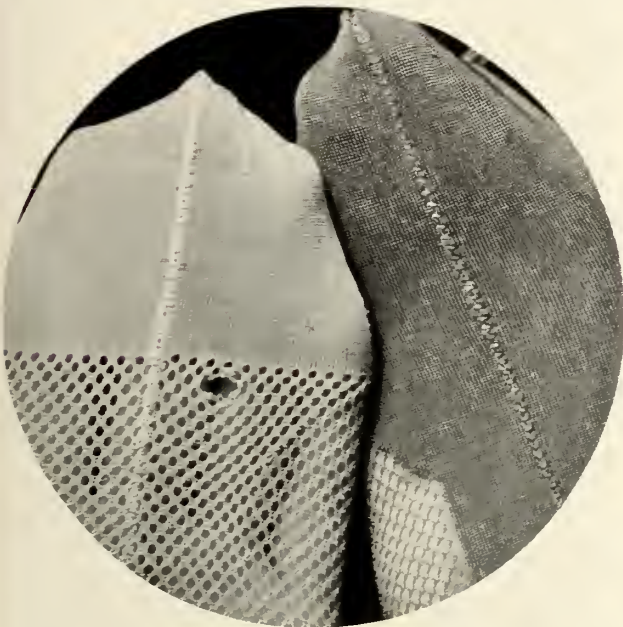
Gauge	Thread
39	Five or under.
42	Five or under.
45	Five or under.
48	Four or under.
51	Three or under.

Four-thread or more for medium wear and dressy appearance.

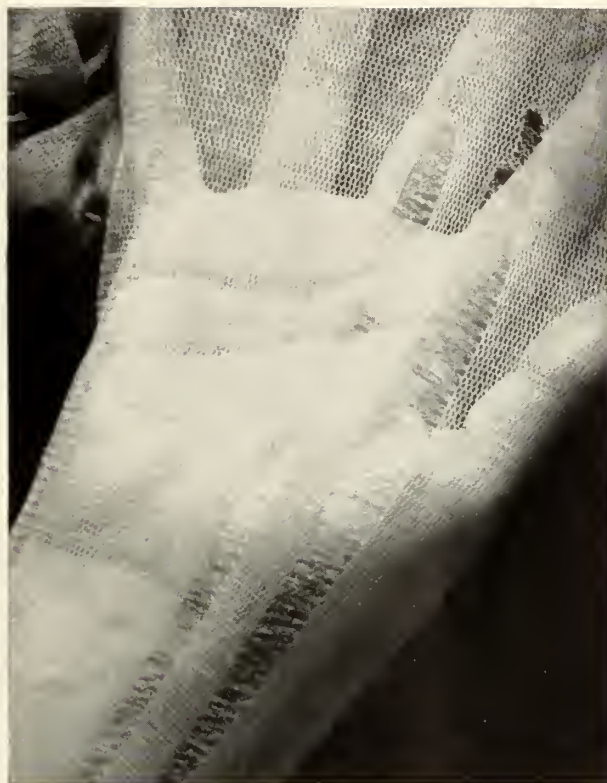
Two- and three-thread for dress, but not for long wear.

WHY HOSE WEAR OUT

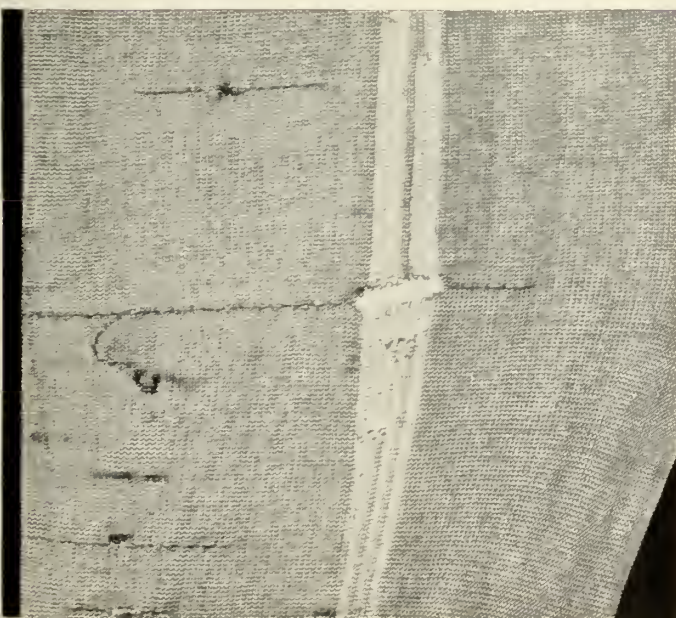
Most hose wear out because the weight selected is not suitable for their use. Long service should not be expected from sheer hose used for general wear.



1. Mesh hose need durable reinforcements at the toe and heel (right); otherwise holes soon appear (left).



2. Ordinary mesh often runs badly.



3. Some hose snag easily because of too-few courses or too-low twist.

Bargain hose are not always good buys. They may be:

Irregulars or seconds.—These have manufacturing imperfections such as stains, mended places, or uneven yarns, which may or may not affect the appearance or wearing quality. Such hose should be labeled as irregulars, and examined carefully before purchasing.

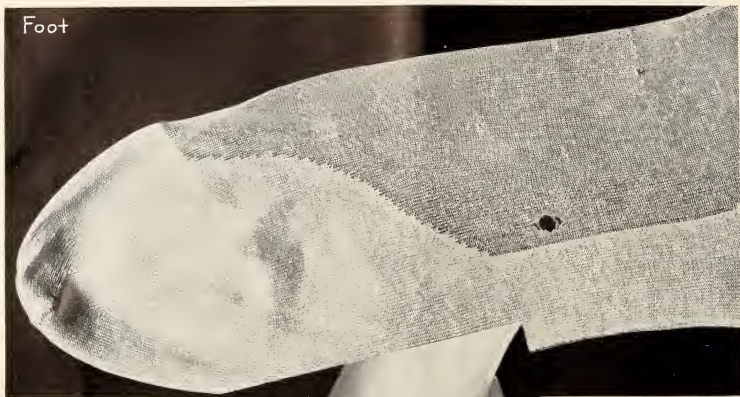
Poor construction.—Low gauge with fewer courses and threads permits lower manufacturing costs.

Redyed.—If a color proves unpopular and the hose are not sold, it is often removed and the hose redyed. This lessens the wearing quality, especially when done more than once.

Discontinued colors or styles, in good-quality hose, are often sold at special sales and are good buys.

WHY HOSE WEAR OUT

Foot



Toe



● **At the foot:**

Too-little reinforcement in hose.
Hard calluses on feet.
Prominent foot bones.
Rough places or tacks in shoe.

● **At the toe:**

Too-short hose.
Too-thin reinforcement.
Too-short shoes.
Worn shoe linings.
Too-long toenails.

● **At the heel:**

Too-low or too-thin hose reinforcement.
Rough or callused heels.
Loose-fitting shoe heels that rub.
Worn or rough shoe linings.

Heel



WHY HOSE WEAR OUT



- **At welt:**

Hose too tight over knee.
Hose supporters that cut or are fastened below the welt.
Pulling hose on carelessly.

- **At top of heel:**

Too-heavy reinforcement for weight of hose.
Too-short hose so that the heel pulls under the foot and rub comes above the reinforcement on the stocking.

Ankle



- **At ankle:** Hose too tight over ankle.
Defect in joining of hosiery foot and leg.
Sharp edges on shoe buckles or straps.
Interference of prominent ankle bones.

